United Nations A/55/823-S/2001/197

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
7 March 2001

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda items 33, 40 and 164

Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Culture of peace

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 6 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the exchange of letters between Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel, and Yassir Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, dated 9 September 1993. In the light of the recent violence and terrorism, the commitments entailed in these letters, and their importance to the success of the peace process, deserve special attention.

Chairman Arafat's letter explicitly stated the fundamental undertakings of the Palestinian leadership to renounce the use of violence and terrorism and accept the path of negotiation as the only means for resolving outstanding issues. Specifically, Chairman Arafat wrote:

> The PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security ... The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process, and to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations ... the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators.

It was in response to these cardinal undertakings that the Government of Israel recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and agreed to formally negotiate with it in the context of the Middle East peace process.

These letters of mutual recognition, to which we have often referred in previous letters addressed to you, and which were exchanged just prior to the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993, constitute the underlying basis of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and of all subsequent agreements concluded between Israel and the Palestinian side. As such, any violation of the commitments contained in these letters undermines the very

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foundation of the peace process and imperils the achievement of its noble objectives.

Over the past several months, I have drawn your attention to a rising tide of serious violations of the commitment to non-violence and peaceful negotiations enshrined in Chairman Arafat's letter. The wave of terrorist attacks to which Israeli soldiers and civilians have been subjected has been detailed in a series of letters, most recently in my letters dated 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

The ongoing live-fire attacks against Israelis, of which there have now been over 3,000 incidents, are actively supported by the Palestinian leadership. This policy, coupled with the relentless incitement and delegitimization of Israel in the Palestinian media and educational institutions, strikes at the very heart of the peace process and severely undermines any prospect of genuine reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

Israel again calls upon the Palestinian leadership to abide by its commitments, as stated in the attached letter and in subsequent agreements, to adhere to the principle of non-violence, to control terrorist elements in the territory under its control, and to foster an environment conducive to the resumption of peaceful negotiations.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter, as well as of the attached letters, circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 33, 40 and 164, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative

Attachment 1

September 9, 1993

Mr. Prime Minister,

The signing of the Declaration of Principles marks a new era in the history of the Middle East. In firm conviction thereof, I would like to confirm the following PLO commitments:

The PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security.

The PLO accepts United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process, and to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations.

The PLO considers that the signing of the Declaration of Principles constitutes a historic event, inaugurating a new epoch of peaceful coexistence, free from violence and all other acts which endanger peace and stability. Accordingly, the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators.

In view of the promise of a new era and the signing of the Declaration of Principles and based on Palestinian acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the PLO affirms that those articles of the Palestinian Covenant which deny Israel's right to exist, and the provisions of the Covenant which are inconsistent with the commitments of this letter are now inoperative and no longer valid. Consequently, the PLO undertakes to submit to the Palestinian National Council for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian Covenant.

Sincerely,

Arafat

Yasser Arafat
Chairman
The Palestine Liberation Organization

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Yitzhak Rabin
Prime Minister of Israel

Attachment 2

September 9, 1993

Mr. Chairman,

In response to your letter of September 9, 1993, I wish to confirm to you that, in light of the PLO commitments included in your letter, the Government of Israel has decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process.

Sincerely,

Y. Rabin

Yitzhak Rabin
Prime Minister of Israel

10.9.93

Yasser Arafat
Chairman
The Palestinian Liberation Organization